

HONORING PLANNED PARENTHOOD HUDSON PECONIC

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic (PPHP). For years, PPHP has been an instrumental partner in keeping my constituents both healthy and educated about their reproductive health.

Operating 11 health centers in Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Suffolk Counties, PPHP served over 33,000 men and women in 2014 alone. In addition, last year PPHP provided 13,113 HIV tests, 81,941 individual STI tests, 5,896 breast examinations and education and training programs to over 42,000 participants.

While these figures alone are laudable, it is important to note that PPHP affords these invaluable services to our area's most vulnerable patients. In 2014, 76 percent of PPHP patients had incomes at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Limit. For low-income New Yorkers, care is already too hard to come by. I am so pleased to know that these New Yorkers can rely on PPHP.

In recent months, Planned Parenthood has faced prolonged, politically-motivated attacks. It is during times like this that it is most important for us to remember not only the work that Planned Parenthood does, but the people Planned Parenthood serves. PPHP is keeping thousands of New Yorkers healthy, many of whom might have nowhere else to turn. I am pleased to have this opportunity to thank PPHP and its allies for their work. As a Member of Congress, one of my primary responsibilities is to ensure the well-being of my constituents. I am honored to call PPHP a partner in that goal.

On October 21, 2015, PPHP will honor Jill Scheuer, Keith Pattiz and the St. Faith's House Foundation during its Empower Gala. I commend these partners for championing Planned Parenthood's mission. It is only with the aid of allies like Ms. Scheuer, Mr. Pattiz and the St. Faith's House Foundation that Planned Parenthood can continue to provide those most in need with quality, accessible care.

COLORADO ACTS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Colorado ACTS for receiving the City of Wheat Ridge's Cultural Commission Award. The Cultural Commission Award recognizes local businesses or organizations actively contributing to the enrichment of the culture of Wheat Ridge.

Colorado ACTS is a theater school open to children from four to eighteen. They strive to bring drama and arts education to the local community, and they currently serve about 200 families. The organization teaches confidence, discipline and an appreciation for the arts, while strengthening community ties.

Since its inception 15 years ago, Colorado ACTS has produced more than 100 shows.

I applaud Colorado ACTS for being the recipient of this well-deserved honor by the City of Wheat Ridge, and I congratulate them on their success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 13, 2015, I was unable to be present for a recorded vote. I would have voted "No" on roll call vote Number 221 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 255).

HONORING DR. J. RANDALL O'BRIEN

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Dr. J. Randall O'Brien is one of the most respected educators in the Nation.

He took over the reins of Carson-Newman University at a real low point in the school's history.

In fact, just a few years ago, the University had such difficult financial problems that some people thought it could go under.

Under Dr. O'Brien's leadership, the University has undergone a major turnaround, increasing its enrollment, adding new programs, and becoming the most forward-looking small university in the Nation.

Dr. O'Brien recently wrote a lead column for the Knoxville News Sentinel concerning the proposed new college scorecard put forth by the White House and Department of Education.

Because this issue has ramifications for colleges and universities all across the Nation, I would like to call it to the attention of my colleagues and other readers.

J. RANDALL O'BRIEN: SCORECARD FOR COLLEGES UNFAIR AND DAMAGING

There are so many fatal flaws in President Barack Obama's recently unveiled New College Scorecard it is difficult to know where to begin our nation's imperative critique. For starters, how shocking it is to see that our educational leaders housed within the U.S. Department of Education could prove so inept in collecting, interpreting and providing our president reliable data.

College educators fully agree with current public opinion that evaluation and reform of higher education is overdue. To be sure, college accessibility, affordability and accountability are critical issues that rightfully belong on our nation's agenda. Assessment, however, formulated on the basis of incomplete questioning and misleading data may prove far more damaging than having no published assessment at all.

The New College Scorecard notes the annual cost of attending each college, the graduation rate of the school and the average starting salary of its graduates. However, the scorecard includes only data of federal student-loan borrowers. All other students are excluded from the report.

Moreover, the starting salary numbers fail to take into consideration the geographical region hosting the institution. A New York or California salary, for example, would be expected to be significantly higher than an Appalachian one. Should not per capita wealth and cost of living in the institution's region be noted?

In addition, no consideration is given to the correlation of salary and field of study. Teachers, social workers and ministers, for instance, do not expect to earn salaries commensurate to business graduates in metropolitan areas.

Do we wish to undermine and imperil the vitally important work of our nation's service sector, and its college providers, by placing value on salary alone? Do we really wish to discourage the graduation of relatively low-income teachers? Moreover, should not a premium be placed on a broad-based liberal arts education, and the intellectual (and holistic) transformation of the student, which prepares the student remarkably well for any job, including corporate, legal, political, church, community, scientific and educational leadership? Dare we risk reducing the college experience to little more than participation in an elite job training program?

Lastly, despite the White House's insistence on access to higher education for all, the new scorecard fails to acknowledge accessibility of lower socio-economic students to each college. Research clearly shows the correlation in retention and graduation rates to a student's socioeconomic status, family finances and support, and proper academic preparation and encouragement. Should we not value accessibility and accurately factor in its consequences?

I fear the Department of Education, with encouragement from the White House, will seek to employ the New College Scorecard in determining the amount of financial aid for which a student would be eligible at each college. Students attending one school may qualify for 100 percent of available federal grants, while students attending another school may qualify for only 75 percent. This, I fear, would have the unintended consequence of closing hundreds of colleges, which are vital to regional economic well-being and to the attainment of our nation's educational needs and goals.

I regret to say I find the New College Scorecard, however well-intended, seriously flawed, patently unfair and exceedingly disappointing. Can we please do better?

J. Randall O'Brien is president of Carson-Newman University.

HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILL COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 20th Anniversary of the Will County Community Health Center in Joliet, Illinois.

Since 1995, the Will County Community Health Center has been serving uninsured and underinsured patients as well as providing a crucial safety net for families and individuals struggling to afford adequate health care. As the oldest Federally Qualified Health Center in Will County, the Community Health Center has maintained its commitment to patient-centered care for the medically underserved in our community.